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AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN LEBANON AND SYRIA

The Cairo daily Journal du Commerce et de la Marine of 27 August 1952 published the following report from the Bank of Syria and Lebanon on agricultural production in 1951 for Lebanon and Syria.

Lebanon

Acreage sown in cereals in 1951 was slightly higher than that of 1950, with 61,300 hectares of wheat sown in 1951, compared with 60,200 hectares in 1950; and 15,000 hectares of barley sown in 1951, compared with 14,115 hectares in 1950. Because of a deficit in the Syrian wheat crop, Lebanon, Syria's largest wheat customer, had to import its wheat from other countries, especially from France.

The 1951 harvest amounted to 42,000 tons of wheat, 14,000 tons of barley, and 5,200 tons of corn, the latter figure being lower than the corn harvest in 1950. Because of world prices, cotton was cultivated considerably. 4,750 hectares were cultivated, compared with only a few in 1950. Destruction by boll weevils limited the expected crop to 2,300 tons, compared with 212 tons in 1950.

Potato production was 2,700 hectares in 1951, compared to 4,100 in 1950, with comparative tonnage of 17,000 in 1951 as against 26,000 in 1950. There were good results for the most part in the production of vegetables.

The tobacco crop rose from 2,500 tons in 1950 to 3,200 tons in 1951; the fruit crop also rose, especially bananas, which accounted for 13,700 tons in 1951, compared with 4,000 in 1950; a freeze reduced the banana crop in 1950. The citrus fruit crop amounted to 75,000 tons in 1951, compared with 57,000 tons in 1950, which is a rise of 31 percent. Olive production was raised from 9,900 tons in 1950 to 20,875 tons in 1951.

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Cotton acreage was expanded from 77,961 hectares in 1950 to 217,352 in 1951. Because of the boll weevil and unfavorable climatic conditions, the crop was only 50,000 tons, compared with 35,000 the year before. Cotton exports were 22,835 tons in 1951, half of which was exported to France. Considering the importance cotton has in the Syrian economy, authorities are taking steps to increase production through grain selection, spraying, and better methods of cultivation.

Cereal production was affected not only by unfavorable climatic conditions but also by the switch to cotton; thus, 50,000 tons of wheat had to be imported, of which 26,000 tons were imported by the end of 1951, although it had been estimated that the harvest would allow the exporting of 250,000 tons.

Sown wheat acreage for 1951 was 1,036,693 hectares, compared with 992,240 in 1950. Barley accounted for 343,556 hectares in 1951, compared with 416,445 in 1950; and sorghum corn accounted for 27,459 hectares, compared with 118,854 in 1950.

Wheat production was 509,642 tons in 1951, compared with 930,025 in 1950; barley was 154,701 tons in 1951, compared with 122,011 in 1950; and sorghum corn was 45,996 tons in 1951, compared with 111,407 tons in 1950.

Sown acreage of vegetables was 66,000 hectares in 1951, compared with 68,000 in 1950; and the harvest was only 39,933 tons in 1951, compared with 47,235 tons in 1950. Tobacco production of 7,434 tons in 1951 was kept at about the same level of 1950; and the potato production of 36,615 tons was at a slightly higher level. Rice fields were reduced from 5,450 hectares in 1950 to 1,725 hectares in 1951, the rice yield was only 6,255 tons in 1951, compared with the 1950 figure of 11,535 tons. The crop of olives rose from 18,600 tons in 1950 to 89,300 tons in 1951, but the fruit crop remained the same as that of 1950. Livestock also remained the same in 1951, with the exception of chickens, which were 2,612 head in 1951, compared with 1,230,000 in 1950.

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